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A magazine all about preschool, elementary and secondary education

Schoolscapes

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UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

By Claudine St-Germain and David Fuchs

Québec teachers attended the provincewide meeting of program development committees, bringing with them their personal experiences, ideas, enthusiasm and above all their passion for teaching. Here are some of their views on this unique experience and the reform.

Martine Campbell

Education consultant, Commission scolaire de la Rivière-du-Nord, Social Sciences program development committee

"The reform began at the time when I was named education consultant. When I heard that people were being asked to participate in new program development committees, I said to myself that I couldn't only be an observer.

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Building a Program

By Claudine St-Germain

During three days, the program development committees for the Québec Education Program for Secondary Cycle One came together to validate the working version of the document.

Either in disciplinary or interdisciplinary teams, these committees acquainted themselves with the fruit of each other's labour of the past few years. This was followed by a critical assessment of the text at hand using a questionnaire prepared for the validation.

In the opening session of the meeting, Robert Bisaillon, Assistant Deputy Minister for Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Education, invited participants to reflect on the true sense of the program.

"What is a program?" Bisaillon asked participants. "It is neither an educational handbook, nor a textbook, nor an activity guide. We could be tempted to meet all teachers' needs, but we would then run the risk of creating a monster.

"Let us choose to refine rather than overload the document," proposed Bisaillon. "An education program is a document that is used over many years. It interprets society's vision of what its children ought to acquire in terms of competencies, its vision of education and learning."

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I had to join!
We had many discussions about our views on learning and teaching. We also had to clarify certain concepts, particularly the notion of territory in geography. Such exchanges of ideas helped me to develop my own points of view. I now have a more global understanding, and I've learned to do collegial work. The opportunity to take part in constructing something of this importance is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!"

Jean Chrétien

Physics teacher, Le Triolet school, Commission scolaire de la Région-de-Sherbrooke, Science and Technology program development committee

"On top of developing a program that could be used in combination with other subjects, we had to integrate chemistry, physics, biology, etc. However, combining science and technology was the hardest part. Participating in this committee has changed my life. I started experimenting in Cycle One of secondary school, and it's been the most wonderful experience of my professional career!
At present, my students are building bridges out of spaghetti. They are having fun and learning about a whole lot of things, and I can take time to guide them and to observe them. I am passionate about science, and I want to share this passion with young people. I think it's really great that someone from the field like me has been asked to develop this program. This is a program that was built up from the grassroots, and it shows."

Marie-Josée Bédard

Physical education teacher, Ozias-Leduc school, Commission scolaire des Patriotes, Physical Education and Health program development committee

"I was a member of a regional committee that dealt with the reform at the elementary level. When I heard about the creation of secondary-level program development committees, I thought it would be a nice opportunity to continue the process of reflection. Teachers' contribution to the committee was truly essential. The program we developed was based on our experience in the field, and it shows. Even though changes were made to the document during the writing, the fruit of our reflections are clearly visible. It's stimulating.
When I first arrived at my school, physical education was not considered very highly. But since I've taken part in this committee, I've noticed that my colleagues' opinions on the matter have changed. In my experience, however, it will be more difficult to mobilize secondary teachers than those at the elementary level."

Lee Rother

Teacher, coordinator of the Alternative Career Education Program (ACE), Lake of Two Mountains High School, Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier School Board, Secondary Language Arts Advisory Committee (SLAAC)

"My background is in media education and that is what I bring to the committee, as well as my experience working with at-risk kids. In the reform, there is a section on media literacy, and that is really exciting. In ACE, a multi-media, student-centred program for at-risk kids, the students actually produce and edit videos, PowerPoint documents and do desktop publishing.

I see SLAAC as an incredible learning experience, and I'm greatly stimulated by the network of talented people with whom I share the same goals. What we have been trying to do is get more cross-curricular ideas so that language becomes an integral part of every discipline. I look forward to those meetings because it's more of a learning process than anything else. Thanks to the initiative of Abigail (Abigail Anderson, committee representative), the program explores certain fields that I find particulary rich, such as media education.

I am very excited about the reform. The focus is now on learning and not on teaching. ACE, a two-year program, makes use of many of the concepts of the reform (e.g. multi-age, multi-cultural and multi-level groups) and includes cross-curricular competencies, heterogeneous groups, the use of media and technology, etc.

I would like to highlight the fact that the issues of scheduling, the idea of teachers working together and even the idea of how examinations are approached need to be addressed. This reform has to work to bring the kind of kids that I'm teaching back from the fringes."

Denis Lapierre

Science teacher, Rosemere High School, Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier School Board, Cross-curricular program development committee

"Sharing ideas with the other members of my program development committee is a way of validating my ideas, my way of thinking. When you meet experienced people who are involved in their community and find out that their ideas are similar to your own, that is very encouraging. When I teach my integrated sciences course, I also teach information and communications technology. I have great freedom with this program and I take care not to overload students with concepts.

Projects are mostly being developed in Cycle One. In Cycle Two, we have to deal with the expectations linked to the ministerial examinations. These end-of-year examinations will have to be rethought in order to meet the requirements of the reform. Decompartmentalization will have to occur first and foremost in people's minds."

Manon Lessard

Physical education teacher, Louis-Joseph-Papineau secondary school, Commission scolaire Cœur-des-Vallées, Physical Education and Health program development committee

"The discussions were interesting because of the wealth of all our different knowledge: rural and urban communities, sport-study program and individualized paths for learning, well-equipped gyms and outdoors teaching, etc. We all worked together in order to build a program that would correspond to the needs and realities of all. This work has made me want to further explore the existing educational approaches. We have developed a project in Secondary I that is slowly growing and starting to create a stir among other teachers. It is difficult, however, to experiment given the current state of secondary schools. Last year, for example, I was responsible for 12 groups spread across six different grade levels; let's just say that it wasn't an ideal situation."

Isabelle Lessard

Drama teacher, La Courvilloise secondary school, Commission scolaire Des Premières-Seigneuries, Drama program development committee

"I am a firm believer in the place of the arts in our schools. The visibility of the arts and their accessibility to the largest number of people possible, as well as the importance of bringing specialists into our schools are goals that I believe in and the reasons why I wanted to join a committee. I said to myself: 'Let's go and make a change!'

Musicals have been a part of my program for five years now. We work in cooperation with visual arts and music teachers. Students themselves are convinced that these interactions will be useful in other areas, even if it is only for summer job interviews. We're doing project-based work all the time.

I believe in and support the reform. To open up to the world, to look at what is happening elsewhere, to create links between the different subjects, this is precisely what at-risk students need. If the competencies that young people are going to acquire can really help them in their everyday lives, that is a big plus!"

The Validation Process

Over the past three days, the program development committees have given their feedback on the working version of the Québec Education Program for Secondary Cycle One. Yet this is just one step in the validation process. Here is a quick look at the steps that led up to this event, as well as what lies ahead.

October 2000 Work on the QEP for Secondary Cycle One begins. Members of the program development committees gather at a provincewide meeting to explore the underlying concepts of the education reform. While some people are already familiar with the reform through their work in the elementary sector, others are meeting for the first time.

February and October 2001 A second provincewide meeting for the expanded program development committees is held.

2001-2002 The various program development committees, expert committees, writing committees, etc. continue their work throughout the year.

May 2002 Writing committees work to polish and harmonize the programs of study submitted by the various committees.

September 2002 A working document is distributed for validation purposes; it is also made available to teachers on-line via a secured Web site.

October 2002 The first step in the consultation process. The 300 members of the program development committees (including 200 teachers) meet for three days to validate the working version of the QEP for Secondary Cycle One. The process takes place in small [illegible] groups of 5 to 8 people, using a consultation document – a detailed [illegible] of the chapters of the QEP for Secondary Cycle One – to [illegible] the clarity, pertinence and [illegible] suggestions, observations

Second step: The consultation document will be sent to some 500 teachers in 15 target schools. These include one target school per region, a few private schools, and a few schools from the English-language sector.

Third step: The same consultation document will be used to survey the education sector's partners. Sixteen organizations have been identified, representing unions, teachers' associations, parents' associations and school administrators.

November 11, 2002 End of the consultation and validation process.

The Ministère will compile and analyze the results of the consultation process. The feedback will be used to improve the QEP for Secondary Cycle One by clarifying, adding or removing elements.

August 2003 A final version will be distributed so that schools can begin integrating the new program into Secondary Cycle One.

2004 Application of the QEP in Secondary Cycle One.

2005 Obligatory application of the QEP for all Secondary Cycle One students.

A Meeting of Minds

By Eve Krakow and Claudine St-Germain

For two days, the members of the development committees worked in interdisciplinary teams to validate the QEP for Secondary Cycle One. *Schoolscapes* asked a few teachers how they found the experience. Here is what they said.

Lise Saint-Laurent

Dance teacher, A.-N. Morin school, Commission scolaire des Laurentides

"I already had quite a bit of experience in interdisciplinary work, because I do a lot of project-based work in my school. For example, my students act as live models for the students in visual arts, which gives them opportunities to practice movement and hold poses. But in the work we're doing here, I learned a lot about the other subjects. It created a certain openness; I less feel closed off in my own world.

I was part of the group that validated the Science and Technology program. At first I thought I didn't know enough about the subject to give an opinion on the program. But I saw that the basic language was accessible, and I felt that people listened to me as much as to the others.

Becoming familiar with the entire QEP is demanding. But it's great to see all the subject areas together, with their similarities and their differences. And I'm proud to see that dance is part of it. Because for a lot of teachers, dance is like another planet! Now they'll be able to see that it's a full subject in its own right."

Hélène Duval

Dance teacher, Collège Charles-Lemoyne

"Working in interdisciplinary teams reminds us that we're educating children as whole persons, and that we shouldn't chop things up by focusing on just one subject. Education takes on a fuller meaning, because we know what the other teachers are doing. We're broadening our knowledge of the other subjects.

However, in order for this interdisciplinary way of working to become a reality in schools, we'll all have to adopt a paradigm of learning. And there will have to be more real collaboration. Too often, teachers use the arts just to enhance a project, or for decoration. Yet the arts go much deeper than that.

I find the validation we're doing here a very human process. We're not sending in our comments by mail, to some unknown destination—we're giving them directly to the people who wrote the QEP. I had the feeling that it was truly a democratic process."

Fernando Parent

History teacher,
St. Patrick's High School, Central Québec School Board

"If you're a teacher, you live for this kind of stuff! In my group, we had to look at how the physical education people were approaching their subject, and see if there was a place for our own subject—in my case, history. And obviously there is, although we usually ignore it. It could be reading a novel on the history of the Olympics, or it could be the history of people's own physical growth over the centuries.

I have to admit to a certain ignorance before this session. As teachers, we all work in the same school, and we have a general idea of what the others are doing, but we may not really understand what's involved. Now, I'm beginning to get a little glimpse of visual arts, science and technology, etc. The next time I see my phys. ed. colleagues, I'm going to appreciate their work a little more.

Basically, we're all after the same thing. The content overlaps and, for a kid, that's great because instead of looking at the world in a kind of regimented way, they realize that all these things fit together."

Michel Gagnon

Teacher, French as a Second Language
Centennial High School, Riverside School Board

"Having people from different subject areas and different regions sitting around the same table is very enriching. Each one sheds a different light on the subject. I think we no longer have a choice but to work in cycle teams like this. The Québec Education Program aims for the overall development of the student. I can't do that alone, and neither can my colleagues. We have to talk to each other.

There was unanimity on one point: the QEP seems to reflect a precise vision, and its orientation is clearly expressed.

It's clear that there is a desire to work together on this. At lunch, when you're sitting with others, you can tell that people want to come on board, they want to do projects together, between teachers within schools, but also between different schools."

Putting it into English

By Eve Krakow

If you were part of the program development committee, you probably realized that most of the Québec Education Program is developed and written in French. So who writes the English version? Who verifies or decides on terminology? And at what point does this process begin?

As director of the Direction de la production en langue anglaise (DPLA), Liette Michaud-Hedge coordinates production of the English version of the QEP. Working within the Services à la communauté anglophone (SCA) under the authority of Assistant Deputy Minister Noel Burke, the DPLA is in charge of English translation and the revision of English texts for the Ministère de l'Éducation. For the QEP, Michaud-Hedge also worked in close collaboration with the Direction générale de la formation des jeunes (DGFJ).

The biggest challenge, she said, was getting the document out in time: "If we had waited until the final document was ready, there is no way we would have been able to get the English version out until at least December." Instead, they managed to get the English version out within three weeks of the French—"a phenomenal achievement."

To achieve this, the DGFJ supplied DPLA translators with preliminary drafts in June and July—although a few sections didn't land on their desks until August.

A team of 11 translators worked simultaneously on the program throughout the summer. (That was a challenge in itself, Michaud-Hedge noted. It's not easy to find the personnel and the energy at a time when most professionals are slated for vacation.) Whenever possible, Michaud-Hedge assigned translators the same subjects they had worked on for the QEP for elementary education, to ensure continuity.

As with all educational materials translated by the DPLA, after an initial translation, each section was sent to a "validator"—a teacher or subject specialist who verifies the terminology used. In the case of the Secondary QEP, the validator was often an English-speaking member of the writing committee.

Translators worked hard to ensure that the soul of the QEP would not "get lost in the translation," said Michaud-Hedge. "We had to make sure to keep to the spirit of the underlying philosophy of the program, yet make it user-friendly and applicable to the English community." Some subject areas required a bit of adaptation, such as examples or cultural references in the area of Personal Development.

IN THE QEP LABORATORY

By Alexandre Robillard

The Québec Education Program for Secondary Cycle One had its own laboratory: the program development committees. Directing this busy hive were the program coordinators. *Schoolscapes* met with a few.

Lise Ouellet is coordinator for the French, language of instruction program and coordinator of the program development committee for this subject. As for all subjects, the team included teachers, education consultants and university professors: six for the core committee, and 15 to 20 for the expanded program development committee.

These discussions resulted in the identification of three educational aims for developing language competencies across all subjects: proficiency in oral and written French, the ability to structure one's ideas, and the construction of one's social and cultural identity. This last aspect ties into the power of language. "Language is an important means for participating in school and public life," explains Ouellet.

An element of social cohesiveness, language also has the power to make us dream. This dimension was not lost on the program development committee. Yet the competency "to appreciate literary works" also embodies the reference to social and cultural identity. "We haven't suggested a reading list, but teachers should propose five books to their students, preferably by Québec authors writing in French."

Ouellet considers her role within the program development committee to be that of a facilitator, as opposed to a coordinator. Her goal is to encourage cooperation, in an atmosphere of respect for each person's competencies. "There are clashes of ideas, and shifts between theory and practice, but the student remains the central concern."

Ethical challenges

The discussions are not without passion. "Sometimes, we explode like a supernova," says Suzanne Longpré, coordinator of the Protestant Moral and Religious Education committee. Her two colleagues, seated beside her, burst out laughing. "The coordinator is there to clarify and motivate," explains Claudette St-Cyr, coordinator for Moral Education. According to Denis Watters, coordinator of Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, the coordinator's role is to make sure there is coherence in the discussion process.

Together, they identified one point common to all three subjects. "In the future, students will have to make enlightened choices with respect to ethical issues," says St-Cyr. This will be true regardless of whether they choose moral education or Catholic or Protestant religious education. One of the program developers' main challenges was therefore to look ahead into the future to foresee the issues that society will be confronted with in 15 or 20 years. "Twenty years ago, no one could have predicted the questions raised by the issue of cloning," says Watters, to illustrate. They believe most questions will be of an ethical nature—which is why they want to start equipping students with the tools to deal with such questions now. "Tomorrow's scientists are in our schools today," says St-Cyr.

Enlightened decisions

Members of the program development committee for mathematics also worked hard to make connections to students' everyday lives in order to help them grasp the concepts being presented. "Mathematics helps develop critical thinking skills. We want students to learn how to make enlightened decisions," says Mirhan Djiknavorian, program coordinator.

The team gave teachers with a passion for their subject a chance to share ideas. "We know that students understand mathematics better when our teaching methods include hands-on activities. For example, they might build geometric figures, which we can then use to demonstrate further properties," says Ghislain Desmeules, who teaches in Métabetchouan. Denis Berthiaume, a teacher in Saint-Tite, likes to have his students work with screws and bolts in order to understand fractions. "I go to the hardware store with my students," he says.

Chantal Leroux, a teacher in Magog, once brought her students to a car dealership, where they looked at the methods of payment for examples of calculating interest and percentages. She also uses the media in her classes. "Surveys can be used to illustrate a number of mathematical concepts," she explains.

Luckily, there were a few sections the DPLA did not have to translate: English Language Arts was of course written in English, Français, langue seconde stays in French and Intégration linguistique et scolaire is not offered in English schools. The DPLA did revise the sections on English as a Second Language that appear in the French version, however.

Throughout the process, DPLA translators continually received updates and modifications to the original text, as French writers scrambled to complete their own version. Given the tight deadlines for producing both versions, last-minute changes meant that some inaccuracies and printing mistakes invariably slipped in.

"We're hopeful that with the rewrite that will come after the validation process, we'll be able to produce a shipshape document for spring." To this end, she welcomes constructive feedback on the English version from educators. Liette Michaud-Hedge can be reached by e-mail at <Liette.Michaud-Hedge@meq.gouv.qc.ca>.

WORK IN PROGRESS

By Claudine St-Germain

The next year promises to be a busy one for the Direction générale de la formation des jeunes.

The Direction générale de la formation des jeunes (DGFJ) includes three departments: the Direction des programmes, the Direction de l'évaluation and the Direction de l'adaptation scolaire et des services complémentaires. "The role of the DGFJ is to outline the main guidelines and to coordinate all the activities for these three departments," explains Margaret Rioux-Dolan, director of the DGFJ.

"We are also in contact with the other departments of the Ministère de l'Éducation and other ministries to ensure that all actions are taken with the greatest possible attention to the best interests of young people," says Rioux-Dolan. "But first and foremost, we work with all the players in the education network so that each and everyone feels a part of the reform."

Here is the game plan of the DGFJ for the next year:

DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DE LA FORMATION DES JEUNES	
Revision of the Basic school regulation	Consultation on the draft regulation with partners in the school network SPRING 2003
DIRECTION DES PROGRAMMES	
Québec Education Program for Secondary Cycle One	Validation: FALL 2002 Revision: WINTER 2003 Distribution: AUGUST 2003
DIRECTION DE L'ÉVALUATION	
Framework for evaluation in preschool and elementary school	Distribution in schools SEPTEMBER 2002
Regional training on the competency scales and the frame of reference	OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2002
Policy on the Evaluation of Student Learning	JUNE 2003
DIRECTION DE L'ADAPTATION SCOLAIRE ET DES SERVICES COMPLÉMENTAIRES	
Support for at-risk students	Regional study days SPRING 2003
Frame of reference for the organization of student services	Distribution: FALL 2002 Professional development: FALL 2002
Renewal of the MEQ-MSSS service agreement	WINTER 2003

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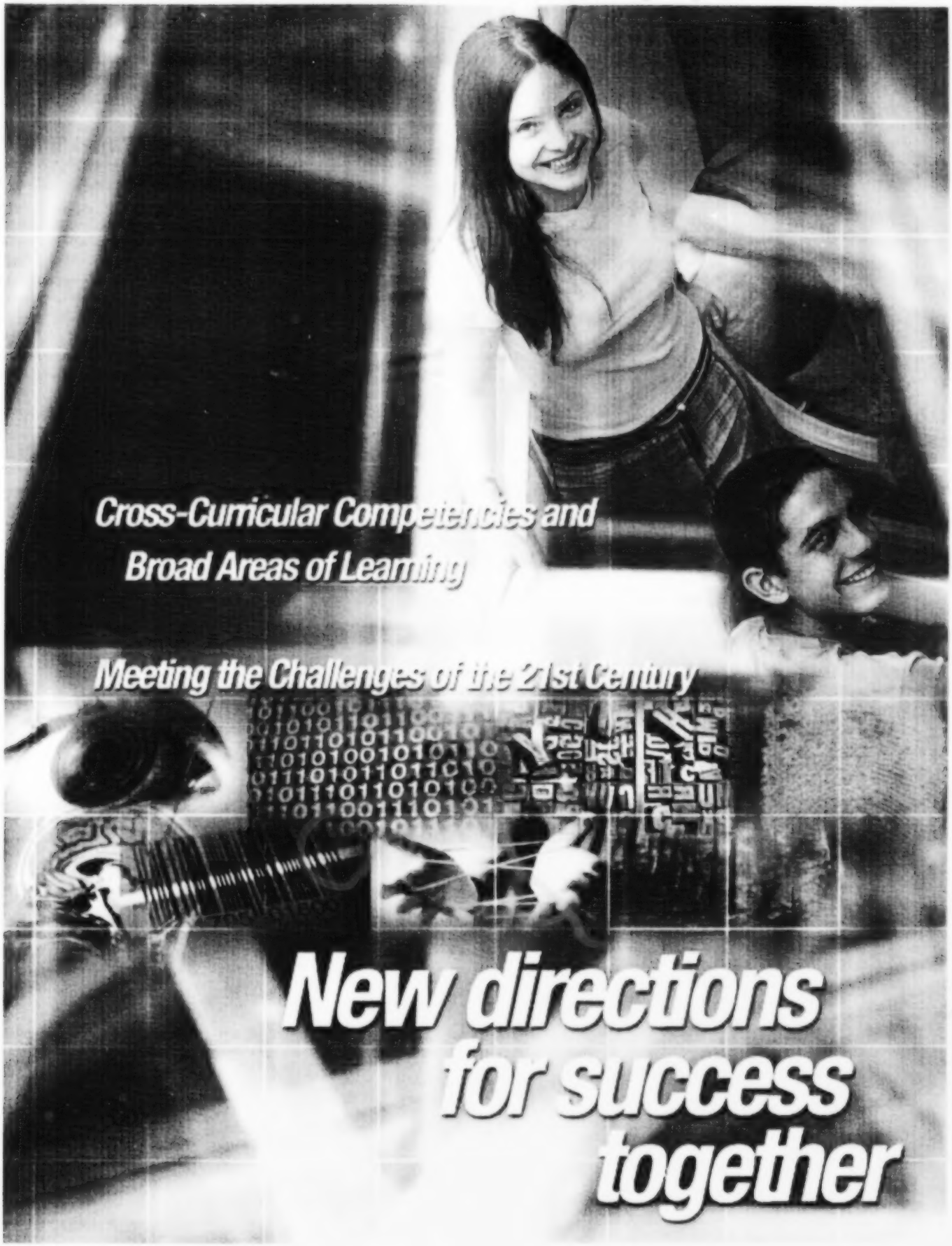

Cross-Curricular Competencies and
Broad Areas of Learning
Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century
New directions
for success
together

CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

The cross-curricular competencies are a focal point in all subjects and school activities. They constitute invaluable development and adaptation tools for understanding the world, and guidelines for students' behaviour. The focuses of the cross-curricular competencies and other elements that favour their development are clearly described in Chapter 2 of the Québec Education Program.

To use information

Using information competently involves employing the available sources of information appropriately and learning how to utilize research strategies effectively. It requires doing a critical analysis of the validity and relevance of information, organizing, synthesizing and processing the information gathered so as to establish the connections between what one already knows and new information and making use of the information in new contexts.

To solve problems

Solving problems involves handling various situational problems rationally, effectively and autonomously by learning to analyze accurately the complexity of the situation. It requires defining the key elements of a problem and listing and evaluating possible solutions. Problem solvers must test their hypotheses and persevere until the problem is solved, adopting a flexible approach in their reflection and in the adjustment of their procedures.

To exercise critical judgment

This competency involves adopting an informed position with regard to life's problems by learning to form an opinion on the basis of a rigorous analysis of a question and its implications. This means defining the question under consideration, considering the facts and verifying their accuracy, and weighing the logical, ethical or aesthetic issues involved. People who exercise critical judgment base their opinions on the exploration of various points of view, and can justify and qualify them.

To use creativity

Using creativity involves coming up with ideas, solutions, and imaginative procedures by learning to deal with a large variety of resources. It means envisaging different scenarios and ways of doing things, exploring the unknown, turning obstacles into resources, adopting new strategies and techniques, accepting risks and persisting, despite the insecurity created by a new challenge.

To adopt effective work methods

This competency involves carrying out or completing work by learning to consider all aspects of a task, evaluating its complexity and analyzing and adjusting one's procedure. Effective workers select appropriate means for attaining their objectives, reflect on the best way to carry out a task and employ the necessary resources. They adapt their work methods to the task and the context and readjust their actions as required.

To make use of information and communications technologies

This competency involves mastering information and communications technologies, which can accelerate the development of many cross-curricular and subject-specific competencies, by learning to use their various functions, using appropriate working and troubleshooting strategies and respecting the ethics of ICT use. It also involves evaluating the effectiveness of ICT and making use of them in various learnings.

To know himself/herself

This competency involves accepting responsibility for one's own development while seeking to broaden one's horizons. Students who know themselves define themselves as responsible, autonomous individuals and are indeed becoming such individuals by learning to express their opinions, perceive the influence of others and affirm their choices. They use their potential to the full, evaluate their achievements and progress, are open to their surroundings, seek to expand their cultural horizons and establish long-term goals.

To cooperate with others

Cooperating with others involves participating actively in tasks or projects whose size or complexity calls for teamwork, by learning to exchange ideas and points of view, listening to others and respecting different views. Teamwork entails using problem-solving approaches with peers, assessing one's own participation and that of others in the team's work, and assessing the impacts of teamwork.

To communicate appropriately

This competency involves mastering various modes of communication and using their resources to affirm one's personal, social and cultural identity. People who communicate appropriately have learned to express their world-view by sharing their ideas, feelings and values, respecting the rules, codes and conventions of each mode of communication, adapting modes of communication or registers of language to a given situation, and analyzing, adjusting and evaluating the communication on the basis of the reactions of the addressees.

Educational Aims and Focuses of Development

The broad areas of learning deal with the important problems of contemporary life. Each area of learning has an educational aim to guide teachers and other school staff in their activities both in class and in school. These educational aims and other information related to the broad areas of learning can be found in Chapter 3 of the Québec Education Program.

Health and Well-Being

Educational aim: To ensure that students develop a sense of responsibility for adopting good living habits with respect to health, safety and sexuality

Focuses of development: Self-awareness and awareness of his/her basic needs
Awareness of the impact of his/her choices on health and well-being
Active lifestyle and safe behaviour

Personal and Career Planning

Educational aim: To enable students to make and carry out plans that develop their potential and help them integrate into society

Focuses of development: Self-knowledge and awareness of his/her potential and how to fulfill it
Adoption of strategies related to a plan or project
Familiarity with the world of work, social roles, and occupations and trades

Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities

Educational aim: To encourage students to develop an active relationship with their environment while maintaining a critical attitude towards consumption and the exploitation of the environment

Focuses of development: Awareness of his/her environment
Construction of a viable environment based on sustainable development
Responsible use of goods and services
Awareness of economic and ethical social aspects of consumption

Media Literacy

Educational aim: To enable students to exercise critical, ethical and aesthetic judgment with respect to the media and produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights

Focuses of development: Awareness of the place and influence of the media in his/her daily life and in society
Understanding of media representations of reality
Use of media-related materials and communication codes
Knowledge of and respect for individual and collective rights and responsibilities regarding the media

Citizenship and Community Life

Educational aim: To enable students to take part in the democratic life of the classroom or the school and develop an attitude of openness to the world and respect for diversity

Focuses of development: Promotion of the rules of social conduct and democratic institutions
Participation, cooperation and solidarity
Contribution to a culture of peace

The transformation of secondary school is slowly taking place. It comes in response to the needs of a society that has evolved and that must prepare young people to meet the complex challenges that await them.

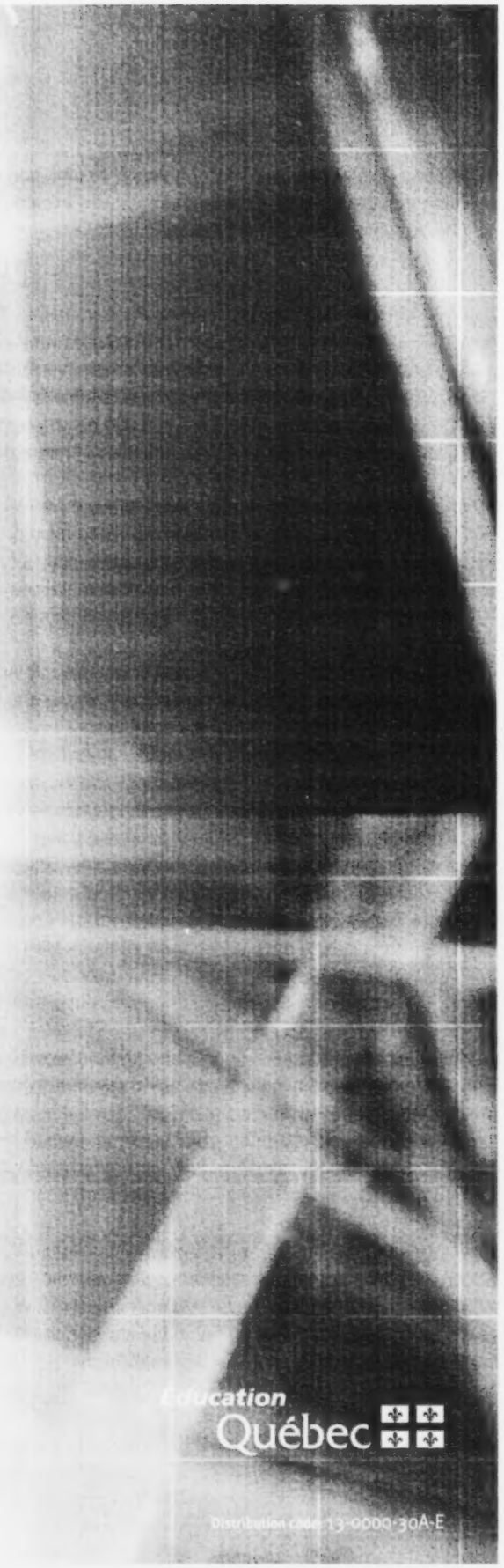
Since the creation of the Ministère de l'Éducation in 1964—a result of the first major reform—school has become accessible to seven times as many students. Over the years, research in education has prompted all involved to continually improved teaching and learning strategies, enabling more and more students to achieve success.

Following the example of several European countries, and in light of OECD and UNESCO reports, it has become clear that learning in itself is no longer enough: we must learn how to learn. The development of competencies has therefore become essential.

The *Québec Education Program* currently being developed is the result of a process that began in Québec in the previous decade. In 1994, a task force led by Claude Corbo drew up an exit profile of young people leaving secondary school. Entitled *Preparing Our Youth for the 21st Century*, the report highlighted the major changes sweeping our society and formulated ten focuses for reflection. These served as the basis for a broad collective debate. The expectations of society's various stakeholders were presented in 2000 in briefs tabled before the Estates General on Education. It was their concerns that led to a ministerial plan of action in 1996, *A New Direction for Success*. This was the true starting point for the second major education reform.

Hundreds of teachers working with university experts and specialists at the Ministère de l'Éducation will determine the basic learnings that young Quebeckers will have to master. The current document explains the competencies as well as the attitudes and behaviours that are essential for meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

Professionals in all subjects and the education community's partners are called on to work toward a common goal. This coherence will give young people every chance to succeed. It will help them become autonomous and responsible citizens, capable of building a society that respects diversity and is open to the world.



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